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EXCISE

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ACTION EA 19

INFO GPM 03, SC 01, RSC 01, USIA 12, H 02, NSC 10, NSAE 00, L 03, INR 07, P 04,
CIA 04, DOD 01, SP 02, SS 35, CU 04, AID 30, IO 21, RSR 01, /160 W

R 121300Z SEP 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6705
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 4226
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL DANANG 950
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 2514

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 5752

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

REF: SAIGON 4559

SUBJECT: STUDENT REACTION TO ELECTIONS

1. MORNING OF SEPT 9 REPRESENTATIVES OF FOUR STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS HELD MEETING INSAIGON TO DENOUNCE PRESIDENTIAL AND UPPER HOUSE ELECTIONS. GROUPS INVOLVED WERE THE GENERAL STUDENT COMMISSION, REPRESENTATIVE STUDENT COMMISSION, SAIGON STUDENT UNION, AND STUDENT COMMMITTEE AGAINST RIGGED ELECTION. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, SOME FIVE HUNDRED STUDENTS PLUS SOME DEFEATED PRESIDENTIAL

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AND UPPER HOUSE CANDIDATES APPEARED. PROMINENT AMONG LOSERS IN ATTENDANCE WAS TRUONG DINH DZU.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Joan Izenberg DATE 12/24/81
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

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2. FOUR GROUPS ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE DECLARING THAT A) ELECTIONS WERE RIGGED, AND "ARRANGED BY FOREIGN HAND" B) STUDENTS "DENY THE RESULTS" SINCE ELECTIONS WERE NOT DEMOCRATIC, C) DENOUNCE BEFORE DOMESTIC AND WORLD OPINION THAT RESULTS OF ELECTION WERE PRE-ARRANGED, AND D) REQUEST NATIONAL ASSEMBLY TO INVALIDATE ELECTION AND ORGANIZE ANOTHER. COMMUNIQUE ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT STUDENT COMMITTEE AGAINST RIGGED ELECTION WOULD BE ENLARGED TO FORM "YOUTH, UNIVERDITY AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS COMMITTEE FIGHTING FOR DEMOCRACY".

3. THERE HAVE THUS FAR BEEN NO APPARENT REPERCUSSIONS FOR MEETING. HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO [redacted], ONE OF DEFEATED CANDIDATES WHO REPORTEDLY ATTENDED SEPT 9 MEETING, STUDENTS AT SAIGON UNIVERSITY FACLTY OF PEDAGOGY WILL GO ON STRIKE SEPT 13 TO PROTEST ELECTION. [redacted] DENIES THAT HE PARTICIPATED IN SEPT . MEETING, BUT HE DOES APPEAR TO BE IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH STUDENT GROUPS. [redacted] THAT HE IS REASONABLY WELL SATISFIED WITH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS. A K ADMITTED THAT UPPER HOUSE ELECTION COULD BE TERMED

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"RELATIVELY HONEST". HE WAS DISTURBED AT DELAY IN POSTING FINAL RESULTS, HOWEVER, AND FOUND IT HARD TO BELIEVE THAT DAI VIET LIST (NGUYEN KY) COULD HAVE BEEN ELECTED FAIRLY.

4. [redacted] THAT, DESPITE RELATIVE HONESTY OF ELECTION, SEVERAL GROUPS ARE DISSATISFIED, MOST NOTABLY BUDDHISTS AND STUDENTS. HE ADDED THAT BUDDHISTS ARE PREPARING DEMONSTRATIONS. [redacted] THAT HE DID NOT ADVOCATE DEMONSTRATIONS, BUT "STUDENTS AND BUDDHISTS ARE ANOTHER MATTER". NGUYEN HUU CHI, [redacted], PRESS OFFICER FOR PRIME MINISTER KY, DESCRIBED SITUATION AS EXPLOSIVE. CHI SEEMED LESS INCLINED THAN [redacted] TO ADMIT THAT ELECTIONS WERE FAIR. HE EXPRESSED VIEW THAT VIETNAMSE FACE DIFFICULT DILEMNA: TO DEMONSTRATE AGAINST ELECTIONS AND RISK LOSS OF SUPPORT IN U. S., OR TO ACCEPT DICTATORSHIP. EMBOFF AGREED THAT DEMONSTRATIONS WOULD

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HAVE BAD EFFECT IN USM. EMBOFF ADDED THAT THIEU GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT BE JUDGED PREMATURELY AND IS EXTREMELY UNLIKELY TO EVOLVE INTO DICTATORSHIP. THERE IS NO LEGITIMATE REASON FOR ANYONE TO DEMONSTRATE AND TO DO SO WOULD BE

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IRRATIONAL AND DAMAGING ACT. [ ] AND CHI WERE NONCOMMITTAL.

5. COMMENT: A) BEFORE ELECTION [ ] CLAIMED TO BE LEADER OF AN INFORAMAL COALITION OF BUDDHIST, CATHOLICS ((TRAN DU AND HOANG QUYNH) AND POLITICAL PARTIES DEDICATED TO KEEPING UPPER HOUSE ELECTION HONEST. [ ] SAID THEN (REFTEL) THAT HE COULD ACCEPT ELECTION IF NO MRE THAN TWO OF SLATES BELIEVED TO HAVE GOVERNMENT BACKING WON. ONLY ONE DID (NO.
/), AND [ ] GAVE IMPRESSION THAT HE COULD LIVE WITH RESULTS (HE SAID HEINTENDS TO DEVOTE COMING MONTH TO PARTY ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITY AND WILL RUN AGAIN IN FUTURE). HOWEVER, [ ] EMPHASIZED THAT STUDENTS AND BUDDHIST MAY NOT BE SO EASILY SATISFIED.

B) DESPITE [ ] CLAIM THAT HE DISAPPROVES OF DEMONSTRATIONS, EMBOFF STRONGLY SUSPECTS THAT [ ] IS CLOSELY INVOLVED IN WHATEVER MANEUVERS BUDDHISTS AND/OR STUDENTS MAY HAVE UP THEIR SLEEVES.

GP-3. BUNKER

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